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U S Department of Agriculture

The Littlepage Carpathian Persian (English) Walnut

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A new very hardy variety for the North.
One of the Crath Carpathians.



BENTON & SMITH

Nut Tree Nursery

WASSAIC - NEW YORK

Origin of the Littlepage



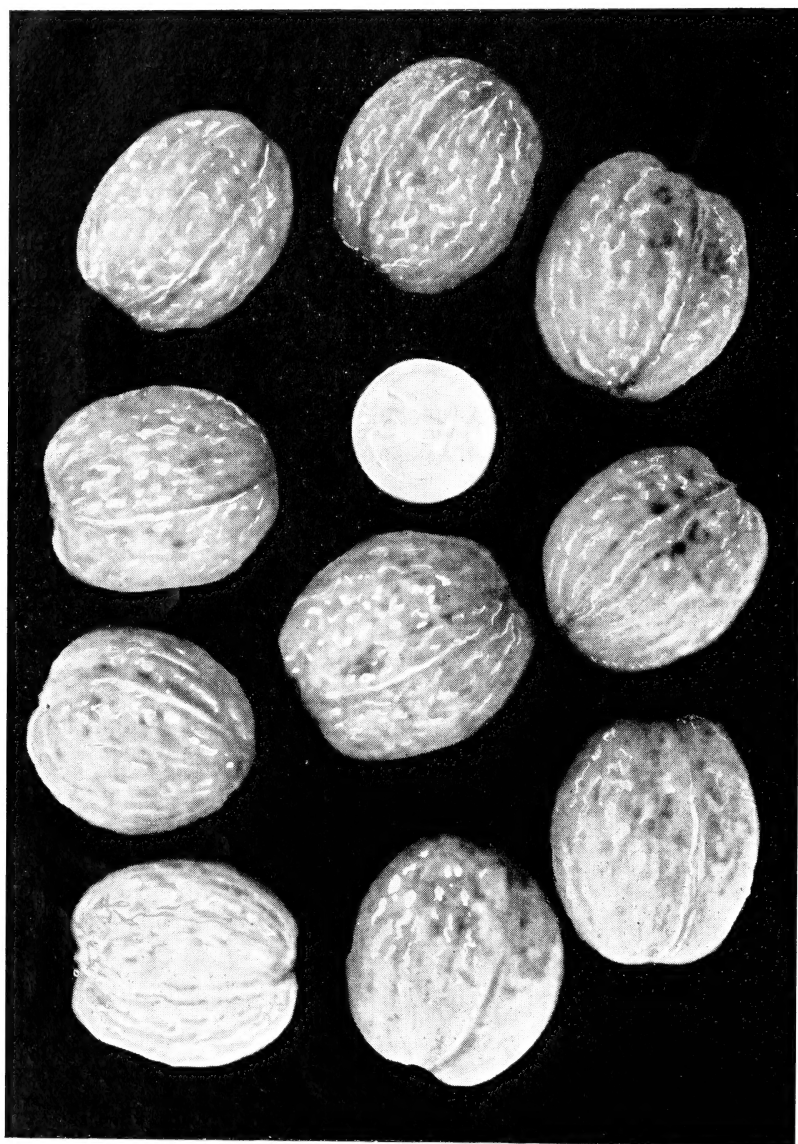
This variety along with about fifty others, not yet proven, was raised from nuts we purchased from the Wisconsin Horticultural Society in the Spring of 1935. In 1937 we started grafting black walnut stocks with wood from these seedlings, giving each seedling a number and being very careful to keep all of our records straight so that each graft carries the number of the seedling from which it was grafted.

The graft from which these nuts were gathered was put on a black walnut stock in the Spring of 1938. This stock was small having been set the Fall previous. This graft first bore pistillate blossoms in the Spring of 1942, again in Spring of 1943 and in Spring of 1944 it also bore staminate blossoms. In Spring of 1944 we pollinised the pistillate blossoms and twelve nuts were produced. It bore both pistillate and staminate blossoms in Spring of 1945, no nuts were set but the weather was so bad that this does not prove that this variety is not self fruitful.

The grafts from this variety are vigorous and rapid growers, they appear to have a good deal of ruggedness, these grafts have come through making good trees in practically all cases we have been able to observe.

On February 16, 1943, we experienced a very cold spell. That morning at Mr. Benton's farm it was —34 degrees F. on a thermometer that is very reliable. While the graft from which these nuts were gathered is on higher ground, another graft of this variety was on as low or lower ground. Neither of these grafts were injured by the cold. The one from which these nuts were gathered produced pistillate blossoms the next Spring and all of the terminal buds of both grafts produced normal leaves. A Broadview Perian walnut graft of the same age growing within fifty feet of the graft from which the pictured nuts were gathered, was killed back to within six inches of the graft union, that is back to five year old wood.

Of the twelve nuts produced, six were sent to Mr. C. A. Reed, Associate Pomologist, U. S. Bureau of Plant Industry Field Station, Beltsville, Md., for testing. Following is a copy of a letter from him giving his findings.



These nuts are from the first nuts ever produced of this variety. A total of twelve nuts were produced as the first crop, season of 1944. Twenty-five cent coin is for comparison of size.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Research Administration
Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils, and
Agricultural Engineering

Beltsville, Maryland

January 29, 1945

Mr. Gilbert L. Smith,
Benton & Smith, Nut Nursery,
Wassaic, New York.

Dear Mr. Smith:

Your letter and the six Carpathian walnuts from hand-pollinated flowers which you sent me on November 12, reached the office many weeks ago, but as Dr. Crane wrote you in my behalf, I was then in the midst of a spell of illness. Altogether I was absent from my desk for 6 weeks and so feel much behind with my regular work. I regret being so tardy.

Meanwhile your second letter arrived. It, too, has been delayed in receiving the attention that any letter from you so richly deserves.

In regard to the nuts, to my mind, these are really very good nuts. The size is what to my mind is excellent. They are large without being too large. A commercial grower on the Pacific Coast would probably prefer a smaller nut but as I understand your purpose, you wish to produce trees that will best suit the eastern home owner. With him, size is important. He and all the rest of us like to grow and show our friends fruits and nuts that are "big." These nuts are well filled, showing that they are not of over-size.

The shells are well-sealed, notwithstanding that the nuts have been on my desk for nearly three months. The shells are thin and the nuts easily crackable in the hands. The kernels are a trifle dark and there is perhaps more than an average amount of astringency in the pellicle. As with others of the species, this is most concentrated about the point where the two cotyledons are attached together and is most easily removable with a knife-blade.

Your own comments regarding the history of the tree are most carefully prepared; also they are very interesting indeed. You and your patrons are much to be congratulated on your habit of carefully recording all pertinent facts. What Mr. Berne A. Pyrke wrote you from north of Crown Point is also interesting. It corroborates your own findings very well indeed. It would seem that you may have a Persian walnut worthy of the name "Littlepage." If Mr. Littlepage were alive today and aware of the circumstances, I am sure he would give you his enthusiastic approval.

He would rather you would make a promising variety like this appears to be immediately available to the public and with the use of his name, even though caution might normally dictate further observation for a number of years. He lived on the theory that it was better to get things out rather than lose a lot of valuable time seeking to make doubly sure.

Sincerely,

C. A. REED,

Associate Pomologist.

A graft of this variety, under its test number Car. S-61, was planted by Mr. Berne A. Pyrke, former Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets, New York State, at his Summer home on Lake Champlain north of the village of Crown Point, N. Y. Following is an extract from a letter written to us by Mr. Pyrke under date of October 19, 1943.

"Carpathian seedling S-61, planted spring of 1942, the most vigorous of the three transplants of that year, came through the winter unscathed, except for the killing of the terminal bud on the leader and for two or three inches below. It made a growth of 2½ feet this year and shows strong vigor. On its present promise I should say that it is worth all of the investment I have made so far in nut trees."

Under date of March 26, 1944, Mr. Pyrke wrote, in reply to a letter by us regarding the effect of the cold of February 16, 1943, on our nut trees.

"Your letter of the 21st March was the more appreciated because of coming at this time when our thoughts are turning toward the summer season not too far away.

"I was interested to observe how closely your experience under the cold conditions of the winter of 1943 checked with mine nearly 200 miles away. That is as far as concerns the refuges from the Carpathians.

"Our critical day in that cold winter was Feb. 15th, not the 16th as you mention. At Moriah Center in Essex County, N. Y., about five miles from my summer property but at a higher altitude, —48 was recorded for the 15th."

As Mr. Pyrke is so interested in this variety, we sent him one nut of the twelve produced in fall of 1944. He replied as follows, under date of November 27, 1944.

"I have delayed reply to yours of Nov. 15th until I could procure some commercial English walnuts with which to compare the nut from S-61. I got these recently in a specialty store in New York. I cracked five of these last evening and used them as standards of comparison.

"Compared with the commercials, the S-61 nut rates as follows:

Size of nut: S-61 larger.

Shell: S-61 thinner.

Fullness of kernel: S-61 about the same, but being a larger nut, the kernels were correspondingly larger.

Brightness of kernel: S-61 was darker than four of the standards and about as dark as one of the standards.

Quality of kernel: S-61 on a parity with the standards; if there was any difference S-61 excelled.

'Bitter tang': Not discernible in S-61, and present in very small amount, if at all, in the standards.

"When you get returns from Mr. Reed, I will be interested to learn of his conclusions.

"Should the time come, and it should come soon, when I retrieve nuts of the order of S-61 from my Orchard Point property (Lake Champlain) I will be distinctly proud."

From the extracts, quoted above, from Mr. Pyrke's letters, you will see that Littlepage (S-61) underwent a very severe test on the shores of Lake Champlain in February, 1943, for if it was -48° F. at Moriah Center only five miles away, it certainly must have been very cold at his Orchard Point property.

The nuts of Littlepage ripen quite early. In the Fall of 1944 they were ripe and starting to fall from the tree on September 15th. The first pistillate blossoms appeared to be receptive about May 19th and all appeared to be receptive on May 24th, this gives a period of 114 to 119 days between blossoms and ripe nuts. Our earliest black walnuts were not ripe in 1944 until September 29th, thus Littlepage is two weeks earlier than our earliest black walnuts. Littlepage is about 25 days earlier than Thomas black walnuts, as our Thomas black walnuts were ripe about October 10th.

We are having the Littlepage patented.

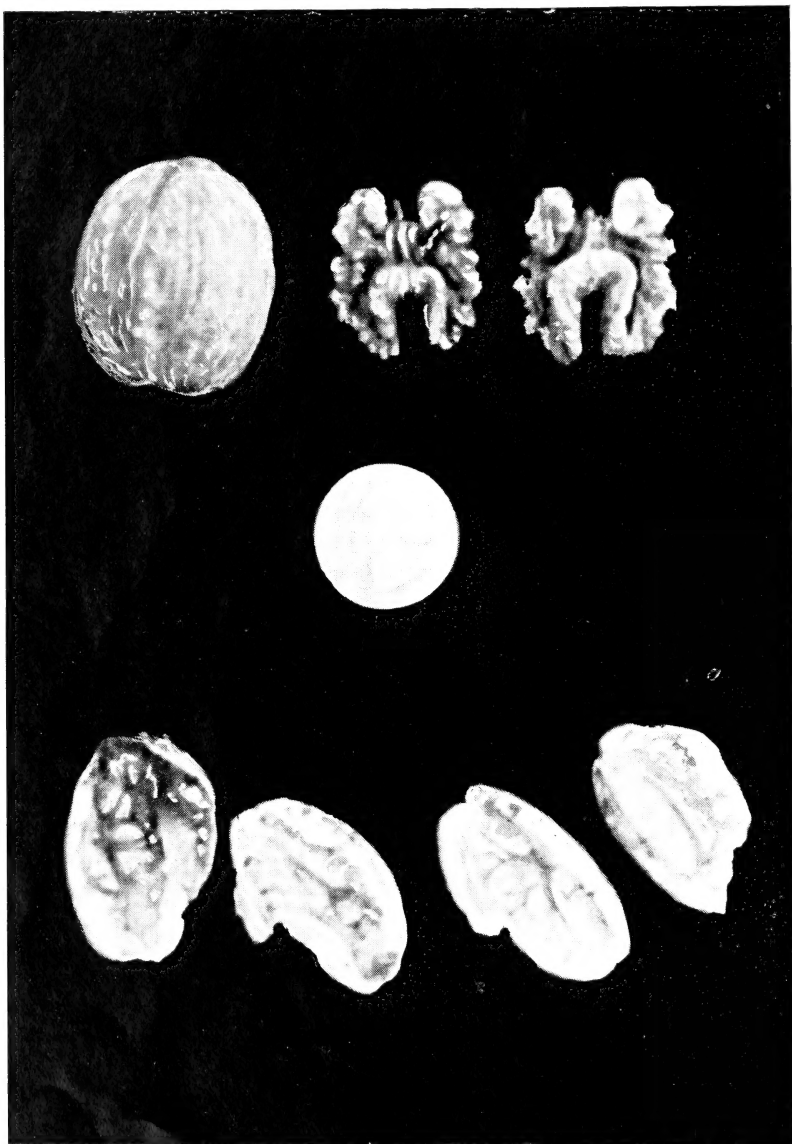
A Word of Caution. This is a new and untried variety, except as recorded above.

We Guarantee that all of the statements regarding the behavior of this variety, as related above, are absolutely true.

We Do Not Guarantee that it will do as well in the future. In February, 1943, it withstood -34° F. here and the graft growing on the shore of Lake Champlain probably withstood as low as -40° F. or possibly colder. But this is only one instance and does not prove that it will stand such low temperatures under any and all conditions.

Therefore, we want everyone who purchases one or more trees of Littlepage to realize that they are taking a certain amount of risk. But also they are performing a service, in that it is abso-

lutely necessary, in order to thoroughly test this variety, to plant it in many different places where it will be subjected to many different conditions. Then, if most of the people who purchase trees of Littlepage will report to us as to its behavior under their con-



This picture shows one whole nut, the kernels extracted from another and shells of the cracked nut. The twenty-five cent piece is for the purpose of size comparison.

ditions, it will take comparatively few years to properly evaluate its merits and faults.

As to the pollination requirements of Littlepage we know very little as yet. It produces its catkins and sheds pollen before the pistillate blossoms become receptive. However, some of the pistillate blossoms appear to be receptive before all of the pollen is shed, so there is some possibility that it will prove to be self-fruitful to some extent. We hand pollinized the pistillate blossoms in the Spring of 1944 with pollen sent to us by Mr. Reed, therefore we have no way of knowing whether the nuts that set were the result of this hand pollinizing or whether the result of natural pollination by its own pollen. In the Spring of 1945 it bore both staminate and pistillate blossoms and we did no pollinizing, no nuts were set. However, the weather was so cold and rainy at that time that it was in no way a fair test.

We have a good many other Crath Carpathian seedlings, some of which indicate as much hardiness as does the Littlepage. We hope that one or more of these will prove to be good and will blossom at the right time to act as a pollinizer for Littlepage. Others will be looking for a pollinizer for it also, so we can expect to solve this problem within a few years.

When Will Trees of the Littlepage Be For Sale?

You have noted that Mr. Reed, in his letter reporting on the Littlepage, says of the late Thomas Littlepage (in honor of whom this variety is named): "He lived on the theory that it was better to get things out rather than to lose a lot of valuable time seeking to make doubly sure." We agree with this. We believe it better to start putting trees of Littlepage out as soon as possible so that the further testing of it can be started with a few hundred trees rather than hold it back until we can flood the country with thousands of trees and then find that it has some serious faults.

We have a few trees of Littlepage for sale this season, either for Fall 1945 or Spring 1946 planting. We should have had many more but the weather was very poor for Persian walnut grafting this past Spring. We got a very poor percentage of living grafts with all of our Persian walnut grafting.

We will take orders for Littlepage trees at any time and will fill orders in the order we receive them. So if you order trees of Littlepage this season and we cannot fill it now, we will let you know as soon as we do have trees to fill your order and you can then verify the order or cancel it as you see fit at that time. Do not send any money until we notify you that we can supply the trees.

We will not sell or give propagating wood of Littlepage to anyone. For the near future, at least, we will limit deliveries to not more than five trees to a customer.

Prices of Littlepage Trees:

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|------------------|-------------|
| Over 5 ft. | \$7.00 each |
| 4 to 5 ft. | \$6.00 “ |
| 3 to 4 ft. | \$5.00 “ |
| 2 to 3 ft. | \$4.50 “ |
| Under 2 ft. | \$4.00 “ |

Send all orders to—

BENTON & SMITH NUT TREE NURSERY
WASSAIC, N. Y.

We are having it patented.



This is a picture of the graft which bore the nuts shown in the other pictures. It was grafted in the Spring of 1938 on a black walnut stock which had been set in this location the previous Fall. This picture was taken in the Fall of 1944. Seven seasons' growth. The man in the picture is six feet tall.



